



WHEN the Army celebrated its 225th birthday last June, more than 60,000 people joined the U.S.

Army Military District of Washington's five-day "Spirit of America" party. A two-hour military pageant, the production featured performances by the 3rd U.S. Infantry (The Old Guard) and the U.S. Army Band (Pershing's Own).

"Spirit of America," a showcase of the Army's role in American history, has been performed at venues in the National Capital Region for two decades and is back again this year at the MCI Center, with new dates at Nation's Arena in Columbus, Ohio.

This year's program is a celebration of service given by Americans in this nation's quest for life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Two soldiers, one male and one female, will relate their concerns and struggles to those faced by soldiers who came before them through journals collected throughout the Army's history. Each segment of the show will use elements of the Military District of Washington's ceremonial units to relate the Army's growth and American citizens' desire to serve proudly for their nation.

PFC Jennifer Lilly is a member of The Old Guard Public Affairs Office.

"I want to convey a celebration of the freedom we all enjoy because of what our Army has done for America," said Mark Murray, MDW special-events coordinator and writer of this year's SOA script.

Murray has been making plans for the coming show for almost a year. Soldiers will begin rehearsals one month before the Sept. 20 opening night. The long preparation ensures a quality performance that allows soldiers to show the skill, honor and discipline that comes from being a member of MDW's ceremonial units, Murray said.

For more information visit www.mdw.army.mil. □



Spirit of America

Story by PFC Jennifer Lilly

